

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

No claims are being cancelled or amended.

Claims 19-24 are being added.

This amendment adds claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-24 are now pending in this application.

In the Office Action, the drawings were objected to for the reasons set forth on page 2 of the Office Action. This objection is respectfully traversed for the reasons given below. Local computer 21 and local computer 31 are given different reference labels because they are separate devices, whereby local computer 21 can be a totally different type of computer from local computer 31. The same holds true for characteristics data 24 and characteristics data 34, as well as for scanning section 22 and scanning section 32, as well as for local computer system 2 and local computer system 3. To have to change the labels to refer to the local computers as 21A, 21B, is believed to be not needed, due to the possibilities that they may be different types of computers. Accordingly, no changes have been made to the drawings. If this objection is maintained, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below, to discuss this objection in detail.

In the Office Action, claims 1-3, 6, 10-12 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,887,140 to Itsumi et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,256,402 to Terao; claims 4, 5, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Itsumi et al. in view of Terao and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,445,777 to Clark; and claims 7-9 and 16-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Itsumi et al. in view of Terao and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,487,659 to Kigo. These rejections are traversed for at least the reasons given below.

In the present invention, there is provided a plurality of local computers, a personal verification system, and a remote computer. The remote computer is separately located from the personal verification system, whereby the remote computer holds the information that a user wants to access by way of one of the local computers. In the present invention, a user's physical characteristics are scanned by a scanning/sending means of a local computer, whereby that information is sent to the personal verification system. At the personal verification system, the received physical characteristics are matched against a closest-matching one of a plurality of physical characteristics data stored in a database, whereby corresponding passwords for each of those physical characteristics data is also stored in the database. The best-matching physical characteristics data is found from the database, and its corresponding password is retrieved from the database and sent to the local computer. The local computer receives the password, and sends the received password to the remote computer for user identification.

It is important to note that the claimed personal verification system outputs a password to the local computer, whereby the personal verification system does not make an access/no access determination. Rather, when the local computer receives the password from the personal verification system, it sends it to the remote computer, whereby the remote computer identifies the user and determines whether or not to allow the user to access common resources stored at the remote computer.

Itsumi, which is the main reference cited against the presently pending claims, operates in a different way than the system and method of the present invention. In particular, in Itsumi, only an Identification Server (see elements 15 and 16 in Figure 1 of Itsumi) and a Local Computer System (see elements 11-3, 13-3, 14-3 in Figure 1 of Itsumi) are involved in a user identification system. A user's physical characteristic data is obtained by a characteristic measuring unit

13-3, 14-3 in Figure 1 of Itsumi) are involved in a user identification system. A user's physical characteristic data is obtained by a characteristic measuring unit 14-3, and that data is degenerated into data that can be sent over a communication network 12 to an identification server 15. At the identification server 15, the received degenerated data is compared to data stored in a database 16, and a determination is then made as to whether or not a user has an access right to utilize the computer network. See column 5, lines 3-10 of Itsumi.

The Office Action admits that Itsumi does not teach or suggest the claimed remote computer, but it asserts that Terao makes up for this deficiency in Itsumi. However, this assertion is incorrect. In particular, column 1, lines 58-61 of Terao merely describes that a controller reads a password from a database based on feature data extracted by an extractor, and an interface outputs the password to another device. Terao's "another device" corresponds to his local computer 1, since the interface discussed in column 1, lines 58-61 of Terao clearly corresponds to his I/F 2h (shown in Figure 1 of Terao) that communicatively couples his local computer 1 to his password input system 2a, 2c, 2d, 2e, 2f. Also, column 2, lines 53-57 of Terao suggests that the computer 1, the password input apparatus 2 and the keyboard 3 are all co-located (e.g., coupled to each other via cables), and in that regard they are all a part of a "local computer system." Note in particular that the computer 1 and its keyboard 3 are communicatively coupled to each other via Interface 2i and 2h. It is presumed that the computer keyboard 3 and the computer 1 are located very close to each other (at least they are for every computer that applicant's representative is aware of!).

Thus, Terao does not teach or suggest a system or method for sending a password to a "remote" computer, whereby a user is identified at the remote computer. Accordingly, since both Itsumi and Terao fail to teach or suggest the claimed "remote computer", and since neither Clark nor Kigo rectifies the above-mentioned deficiencies of Itsumi and Terao, all of the presently pending

claims patentably distinguish over the combined teachings of the cited art of record.

Note also that Itsumi's identification server 15 verifies extracted characteristics data, which it received from a local computer, with registered characteristics data, and based on the result of this verification, it is determined if the user has an access right. See column 8, lines 21-24, column 5, lines 4-11, and column 9, lines 26-27 of Itsumi ("the identification server 16 gives access permission"). Thus, in Itsumi, the identification server 15 does not send a password that has been matched with received physical characteristic data back to a local computer, but rather it makes the sole determination as to whether or not a user can access the system. Put in another way, either a permission signal or a rejection signal is sent back from Itsumi's identification server 15 to his local computer, whereby this does not correspond to the claimed "searched password" that is sent from the claimed personal verification system to the claimed local computer. Accordingly, for this additional reason, the presently pending claims patentably distinguish over the cited art of record.

New claims 21-24 have been added to recite additional features of the present invention that are believed to patentably distinguish over the cited art of record.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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